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RR RUEHAP RUEHNZ
DE RUEHWL #0775/01 2982035
ZNR UUUUU ZZH
R 252035Z OCT 07
FM AMEMBASSY WELLINGTON
TO RUEHC/SECSTATE WASHDC 4827
INFO RUEHNZ/AMCONSUL AUCKLAND 1511
RUEHAP/AMEMBASSY APIA 0407
RUEHSV/AMEMBASSY SUVA 0666

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SIPDIS

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SENSITIVE

STATE FOR EAP/ANP

E.O. 12985: N/A

TAGS: [OTRA](#) [NZ](#)

SUBJECT: NEW ZEALAND COUNTRY CLEARANCE FOR DAVID COHEN, THOMAS
VAJDA AND ALISA WONG

REF: STATE 146716

11. (SBU) Embassy welcomes and grants country clearance to David Cohen, Thomas Vajda and Alisa Wong to travel to Auckland and Wellington, New Zealand from o/a November 7 - 17, 2007. The purpose of this visit is to transit on the way to Apia and consultations with Consulate and Embassy staff and host government contacts.

12. (U) Embassy understands David Cohen is only transiting Auckland and no assistance is requested. Per your request Embassy and Consulate have made hotel reservations for Thomas Vajda and Alisa Wong (details below). Meeting schedules for Mr. Vajda and Ms. Wong will be sent via email at a later date.

Thomas Vajda
Auckland:
Jet Park Airport Hotel, 63 Westney Road, Mangere
Ph. +64 9 275 4100, Fax. + 64 9 275 3291
Confirmation No. 44427
1 x Deluxe Room NZ\$165
IN: 14 November 2007
OUT: 15 November 2007

Wellington:
Bolton Hotel, Corner of Bolton and Mowbray Streets
Ph. +64 4 472 9966, Fax: +64 4 472 9955
Confirmation No. 16821
1 Classic Studio NZ\$202.50
IN: 15 November 2007
OUT: 16 November 2007

Alisa Wong
Auckland:
Stamford Plaza, Albert Street, Auckland
Ph. + 64 9 309 8888, Fax + 64 9 379 6445
Booking No. 2335858
1 x Deluxe Room NZ\$208.13 per night
IN: 15 November 2007
OUT: 17 November 2007
Credit card details are required to confirm this reservation

13. (SBU) Embassy points of contact are listed below.

Auckland, John Desrocher, Consul General
Office: 649-377-1671
Fax: 649-303-1069
Cell: 027-434-3140
E-mail: desrocherjp@state.gov

Wellington, Tom Walsh, Economic Officer
Office: 644-462-6182
Fax: 644-472-3537

Cell: 027-446-4467
E-mail: walshtj@state.gov

14. (SBU) All TDY visitors to Embassy Wellington are required to report to the Regional Security Office for a security briefing if they have not completed an approved overseas personal security-training course.

15. (U) Visitors should use local taxi service, which is generally safe, reliable and frequent. Taxi fare from the airport to downtown Wellington hotels is approximately NZD30.00. A commercial shuttle service is also offered at the airport. Taxi fare from the airport to downtown Auckland hotels is approximately NZD65-NZD75. A commercial shuttle service is also offered at the airport.

16. (U) Travelers can exchange currency at the airport upon arrival and ATM machines are readily available throughout New Zealand. Check cashing privileges at the Embassy are restricted to traveler's checks only up to USD \$300.00. Personal checks will not be accepted. Please note that the Consulate General in Auckland cannot provide accommodation exchange to TDY visitors.

17. (SBU) Biosecurity Fines:

The Government of New Zealand instituted fines for non-declared biosecurity hazards on travelers entering New Zealand with undeclared plant, animal or food material. Travelers found carrying these undeclared items will be immediately fined NZD \$200.00 (USD \$150.00). Biosecurity is a serious issue in New Zealand and fines will be administered immediately and without warnings.

18. (SBU) Security Information:

a. (SBU) All U.S. citizen personnel serving under the Chief of

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Mission authority in a temporary status of 30 days or more must complete appropriate overseas personal security training prior to travel (04 State 66580). Employees who have completed the Security Overseas Seminar course at the Foreign Service Institute (FSI) after June 1, 2000, meet this requirement. All other TDY personnel must either (1) complete the approved seminar at FSI entitled "Serving Abroad for Families and Employees" (SAFE), or (2) have their agency certify to the Department of State's Bureau of Diplomatic Security that the employee has undergone equivalent security training. The contact for this training is Assistant Director for Training at (703) 205-2617. Country clearance will not be granted for any traveler with planned TDY in excess of 30 days if this information is not stated/certified. POC for additional information is RSO Wellington.

b. (SBU) The U.S. Mission in New Zealand currently rates the threat from transnational and indigenous terrorism as low. There are no terrorist groups or support groups believed to be operating in New Zealand at this time. In light of the worldwide security alert all visitors should heighten their security awareness and report any unusual incidents to the Regional Security Officer.

c. (SBU) Anonymous telephonic threats and obscure threat mail have occasionally targeted U.S. diplomatic missions in New Zealand. In response to U.S. policies and actions, various groups in New Zealand have demonstrated occasionally at the Embassy in Wellington and at the Consulate in Auckland. These demonstrations are usually small and are peacefully conducted. During these demonstrations, the host country police and protective services normally provide adequate protection to the Embassy and Consulate.

d. (SBU) New Zealand is considered a medium threat crime environment. As such, Wellington and Auckland have experienced an increase in violent and petty crimes, but they are usually non-confrontational in nature. However, home invasion robberies and assaults, once very rare, are becoming more frequent. Burglaries and thefts occur countrywide but primarily in the large cities of Auckland, Christchurch and Wellington, and visitors should be especially aware that street crime, such as scams and pickpockets, is a daily occurrence in these cities. Common sense precautions

should be taken, especially at night, to avoid becoming a target of opportunity.

e. (SBU) Generally, New Zealand does not play a significant role in the world drug situation; however, evidence indicates that New Zealand has been utilized as a transit point for shipments of Ecstasy, Heroin and Cocaine to Australia. The most abused drugs in New Zealand are locally produced methamphetamine and cannabis. There have been increased amounts of lab seizures and violent crime associated with groups attempting to control this market.

f. (U) All forms of public transportation are generally safe at all times of the day; however, at night visitors should use common sense precautions so as not to become a target of opportunity.

g. (U) The traffic situation in Auckland can be difficult with a moderate amount of congestion. Wellington and Christchurch traffic is significantly better; however, during rush hour moderate delays can be expected. Visitors are advised that traffic drives on the left-hand side of the road. Visitors are advised that traffic accidents are common and that it is safe to pull over so that police may take an accident report. However, visitors who experience hostility or anti-American sentiment should depart the scene immediately and notify the RSO.

h. (SBU) Travelers intending to bring and use any USG provided electronic or photographic equipment must contact the RSO prior to introducing that equipment into the Chancery. Personal electronic or photographic equipment is not permitted in the Chancery. Only in severely limited cases will a notebook or laptop computer be permitted to be used in the Chancery.

i. (U) Precautions should also be taken to not discuss sensitive or classified information outside secure environments or over unsecured and/or cellular telephones, and to securely safeguard classified or sensitive information at the Chancery and not at hotels or residences.

j. (U) Visitors should also be aware of the State Department's Consular Information sheet for New Zealand and the most recent Worldwide Caution Public Announcements, which are available via the Internet at <http://travel.state.gov>

k. (U) In essence, visitors to New Zealand must exercise appropriate caution and be alert to their surroundings with regard to their personal security. Suspicious incidents/activities should

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be reported to RSO Wellington (Telephone (64)(4)462-6000, 24 hours/day).

McCormick